



Texas

Department of Public Safety

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PRESS RELEASE
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DPS Urges Drivers to Move Over, Slow Down for Tow Trucks

This week state agencies emphasize recent change in law

AUSTIN – This week the Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS) will place special enforcement emphasis on the addition of tow trucks to the Move Over/Slow Down law, which requires motorists to move over or slow down when certain vehicles are stopped on the side of the road with emergency lights activated. To remind the public of this important safety measure, the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) will activate electronic signs this week, which will read: *If Tow Truck Stopped Ahead, Move Over or Slow Down, It's The Law.*

“This law is about providing extra protection for those individuals on the side of the road doing their jobs, as well as the people on the roadside with them,” said DPS Director Steven McCraw. “Thanks to this new provision, tow truck drivers, who are usually helping motorists in distress, now have additional protection under the law so they can do their jobs in a safer environment.”

During the 2011 Legislative session, tow trucks were added to the existing law, which already applied to police, fire, and EMS vehicles stopped on the side of the road with emergency lights activated. Motorists are required to vacate the lane closest to the stopped vehicle (if there is more than one available lane in the same direction of travel) or slow to 20 miles below the speed limit.

“Last year, the Texas Legislature amended the Move Over/Slow Down law to now require motorists to slow down or move over when passing a tow truck displaying emergency lights,” said Carol Rawson, TxDOT Traffic Operations director. “At TxDOT, we believe this is an important step toward improving safety for all emergency personnel, including tow truck operators, who routinely work in dangerous conditions along Texas highways.”

DPS issued more than 17,000 warning and citations last year for violation of the Move Over/Slow Down law and another 6,000 through the first five months of this year. Violation of this law could result in fines up to \$200. The punishment is more severe if there is property damage, and jail time is possible if someone is injured.

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